DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 428 010 SO 029 612

AUTHOR Greengrass, Mara
TITLE State Archeology Weeks: Interpreting Archeology for the Public. Technical Brief No. 15.
INSTITUTION National Park Service (Dept. of Interior), Washington, DC.
ISSN ISSN-1057-1574
PUB DATE 1997-11-00
NOTE 16p.; Updated by Tara Tetrault, Melissa Wadman, and Daniel Haas.
PUB TYPE Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Archaeology; Community Education; *Cultural Activities; Outreach Programs; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS Celebrations; *State Archaeology Weeks; *State Initiatives

ABSTRACT

This technical brief considers archeological education and outreach. The brief summarizes approaches and program successes from states across the country that have sponsored an archeology week. It also includes new information on these programs. The brief suggests that the benefits from archeology week include enhancing public understanding of archeology and preserving the archeological record. Contains 5 figures and 8 references. (BT)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 428 010

State Archeology Weeks: Interpreting Archeology for the Public. Technical Brief No. 15.

by Mara Greengrass

SO 029 612

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. M. Greenberg

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources

Technical Brief No. 15
November 1997
ISBN 1057-1574

Departmental Consulting Archeologist

Archeology and Ethnography

State Archeology Weeks: Interpreting Archeology for the Public

Mara Greengrass, Archeology and Ethnography Program, National Park Service
Updated by Tara Tetrault, Melissa Wadman, and Daniel Haas

This technical brief is the fourth in our publication series on archeological public education and outreach. It summarizes the approaches and successes from states across the country that have sponsored archeology weeks.

This version of the technical brief includes new information on state archeology week programs. Information for this revision was collected from a phone survey of program coordinators in 1996 and 1997. Specific examples are cited to benefit others planning programs.

Why Have an Archeology Week?

"This week-long public outreach is one of the most exciting things we are doing collectively in Vermont to promote archeological education" (Callum 1995:1)

Archeology is full of discovery and attracts a curious public, who wants to participate. State archeology week provides a venue for archeologists to involve the public, promote the preservation of archeological resources and illustrate the scientific process of the discipline. It offers educational events for the public and increasingly for schools to generate understanding and support for archeology. In 1996, over 2,000,000 people visited state archeology week events, and this number is a conservative estimate. The first state archeology week was organized by Arizona in 1983 (Hoffman and Lerner 1988:1-2). Originally, the program consisted of a small exhibit and a few events with limited publicity. It has grown to a month-long celebration including an *Archaeology Expo*, a fair where the public may view demonstrations, tour ancient remains, and view living history events. In 1997, thirty-nine states celebrated archeology week or month for their citizens (Figure 1). This large number is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of many professionals, avocationals and other volunteers who recognize the value of this annual outreach program.

Some states have struggled with either beginning or continuing a program. Three states have discontinued them. The reasons often include the time and cost in managing the program, the lack of professionals working in the state, or the problems with reaching a large rural population. Several State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) cited the lack of resources and that it was not a mandated program. Other states have found creative ways to deal with these problems (See Insert). States that lack resources might consider an archeology day or weekend, or coordinate and share

FIGURE 1. STATES WITH ARCHEOLOGY WEEKS, 1997

resources with an adjacent state. Arizona expanded only when more funding and sponsors were available. States should create models that fit their unique situation.

Organization

Archeology week requires considerable planning and effort. States generally coordinate their efforts from a central, organizing office by an *ad hoc* steering committee composed of professional archeologists and avocationals. The committee plans the overall event, disseminates information, raises funds, provides a mechanism for advertising, and encourages the participation of archeologists, volunteers, and organizations.

Local sponsors usually organize and publicize individual events. The committee should engage local groups in the planning process. Local event sponsors need to feel as though archeology relates to them. Local community involvement also boosts public participation in the events.

In 1993, either the state archeologist, the SHPO, a Federal agency, an avocational society, a professional archeology organization, or a private contracting firm led the organizing office. By 1997, the SHPO had taken more responsibility for planning and financing (Figure 2). In all cases, an organizing function that keeps track of events is absolutely crucial.

Most states agreed that a paid coordinator is essential for improving and expanding state archeology week. Individuals who perform this job voluntarily can't devote the needed time for advertising, fund-raising, and program content. Better advertising can result in higher attendance, while finding more permanent funding sources increases the likelihood of continuing the program. The few paid coordinator positions (Vermont, Arizona and South Carolina) are part-time and without benefits. Unfortunately, Vermont was unable to fund the position in 1997 (personal communication, Giovanna Peebles). The organizing office should consider paying for a temporary position or using their education coordinator to help carry out this function.

Oklahoma State Archeology Week

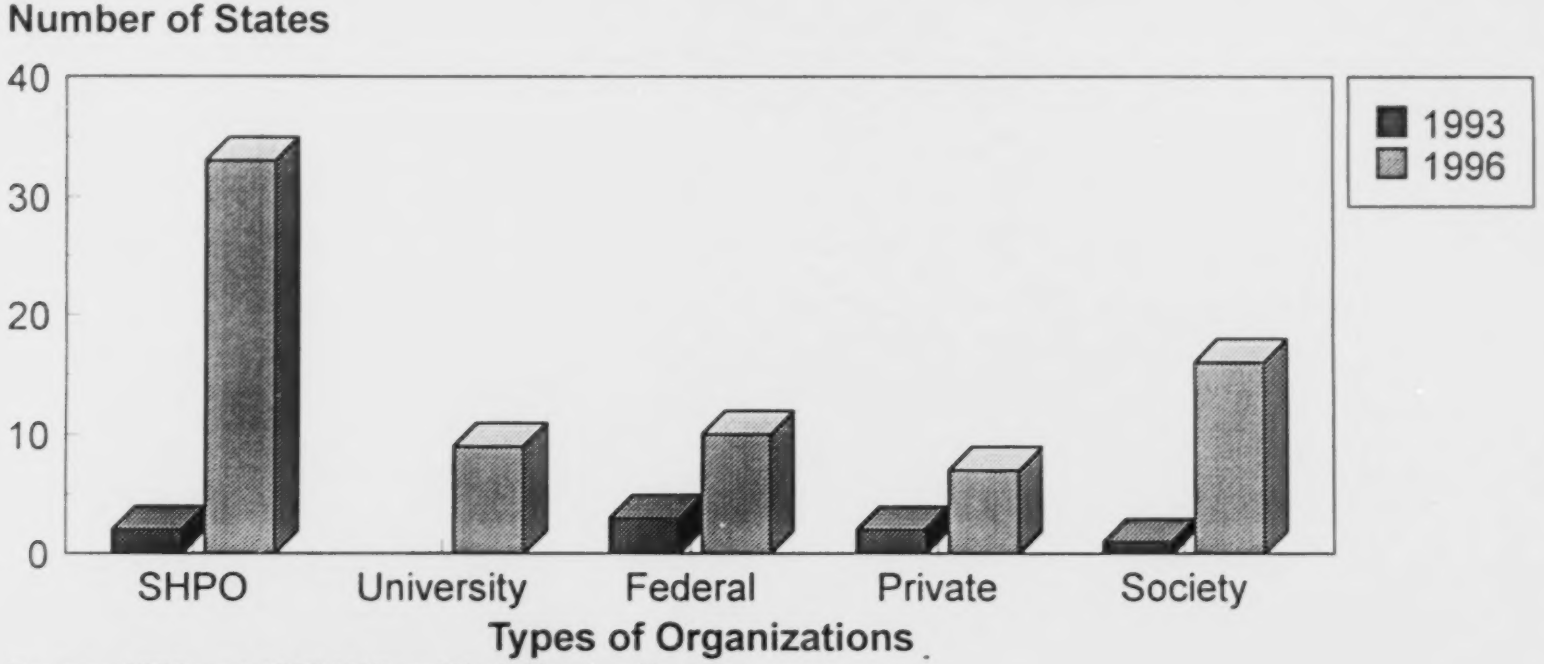
Oklahoma has a large, rural population and few professionals and avocationals. The "typical" archeology week was not a feasible method for reaching most of their population. Instead, organizers sponsored events at the state fair rather than in local communities throughout the state. The fair, the third largest in the United States, attracts about 2 million residents (Brooks 1995). The events included exhibits, hands-on activities and contests. They distributed over 8,500 posters, 4,500 stickers, 3,000 flyers, and 1,500 brochures. This approach allowed them to reach a large audience with few resources.

Timing and Scheduling

First, a date must be chosen for the proposed archeology week. The time frame selected by states is usually in the Fall and Spring. They schedule to coincide with archeological work, good weather, and the school year. A few states hold archeology week during National Historic Preservation Week. However, others felt that it should be held separately in order to develop programs that best suit the need of their audience.

The earlier planning is started, the more time is available to make arrangements, get commitments from individuals and

Organizations Involved in Planning



Source: 1993 and 1996 National Park Service Surveys
Society includes professional & avocational
Figure 2: Planning

organizations, and schedule events. States have taken from three to thirteen months to plan archeology week (Figure 3). On average, planning begins at least six months in advance, and organizational meetings occur once or twice a month. Some agencies and organizations might complain that it is difficult to commit to specifics so far in advance. An early starting point is vital to allow coordinators and sponsors enough time to shape quality programs. Starting early also leaves time to raise funds and design promotional posters and brochures.

Sponsoring: Giving Money and Energy

Funding is the most critical element in sustaining archeology week. Committees must search extensively to secure sufficient funds and be increasingly inventive in soliciting help and finding co-sponsors. Combining volunteer assistance with in-kind and outright funds from Federal, State, and private sources finances most programs (Figure 4).

Many archeologists and their professional organizations are asked to co-sponsor events, donate time and money, and to lecture and give demonstrations. In our survey the number of participants ranged from 6 to 100 in each state. Alaska, Hawaii, New York, and West Virginia depend, in large part, on professionals working in the state. College archeology students are pivotal contributors in Minnesota.

Avocational organizations are an important source for volunteers and financing. In Washington, they plan the archeology week (personal communication, Whitlam) and in Texas, 20 avocational societies help the state archeologist with the program (personal communication, Cruse 1997).

Museums and universities also provide in-kind donations and sponsor events. Museums have facilities for exhibits and lectures and an audience that is prepared and willing to learn. Universities have lecture facilities and students who are willing to volunteer in order to obtain experience.

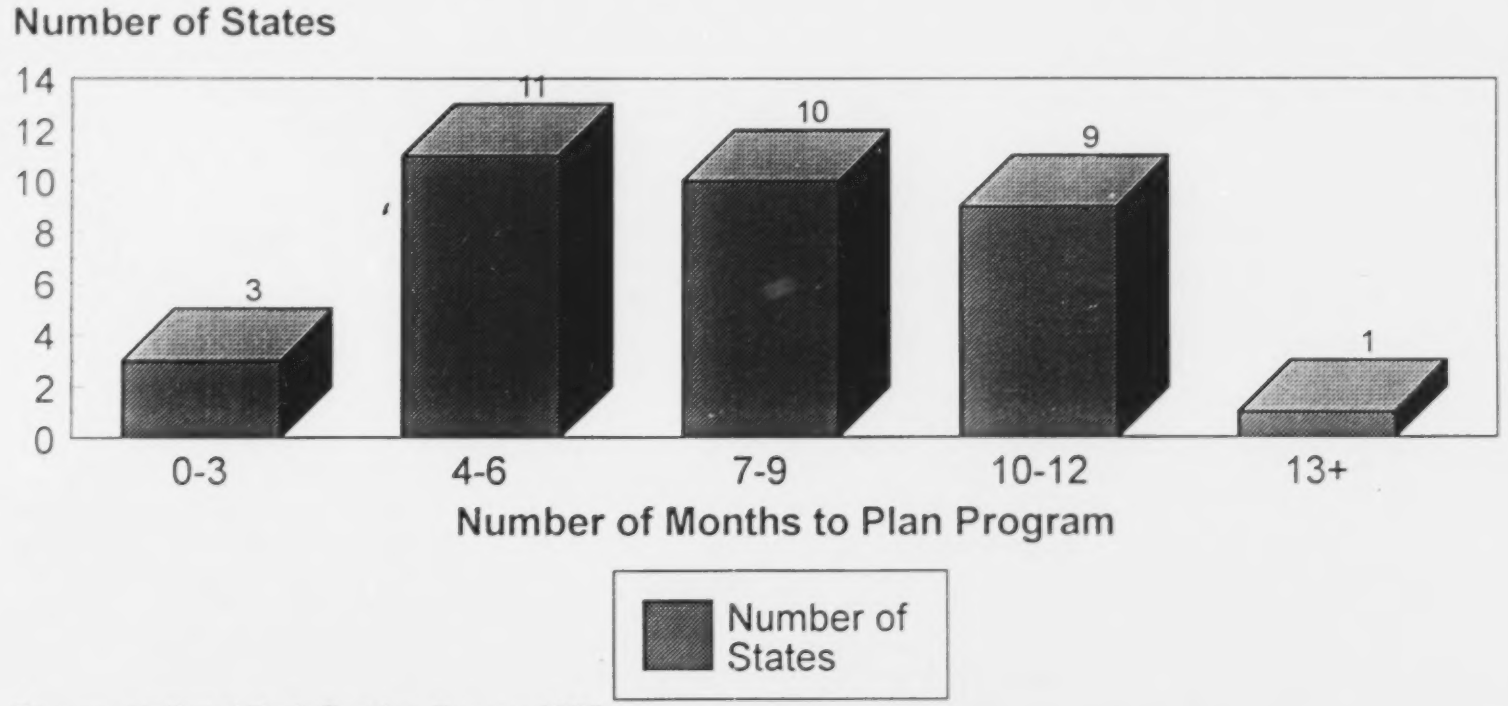
More states are tapping private business for support. Archeological consulting firms are prominent among these sponsors. Utility companies involved in compliance archeology also are important contributors. In exchange, they receive considerable goodwill publicity. Many private contributions are directed toward producing posters. The list of contributors printed on them is great publicity for a company.

Private foundations are underutilized as a funding source. Only Kansas reported support from a local foundation. Foundations contribute millions to specific causes annually including historic preservation and education programs. These contributions are substantial and can sustain archeology week for several years.

Fewer states are seeking grants from their humanities councils. These grants are for small amounts of money and usually cover items like the posters, brochures, copying, postage and honoraria. These grants are never guaranteed and may come with strings attached. For instance, a final report is usually required and strict documentation of expenditures is needed. The management of the grant is time consuming, which has discouraged states from submitting proposals.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Planning State Archeology Week



Source: National Park Service Survey 1996
Figure 3: Scheduling Planning

Figure 4. Sample of Sponsors of State Archeology Week
----------*Federal*----------
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
National Endowment for the Humanities
National Park Service
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Air Force
U.S. Forest Service
----------*State*----------
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Tourism
Department of Transportation
Historical Society
Indian Affairs Council
Lottery
Museums
Parks
State Historic Preservation Office
Universities
----------*Local & Private*----------
Archeology Consulting Firms
Avocational Organizations
Corporate (Exxon, Motorola, WalMart)
Foundation
Individual
Local government
Museums
Native American Tribes
Sierra Club
Universities
Utility companies
Source: NPS Survey 1996

There are products that may serve as alternative sources of revenue. The public might want to purchase posters, lesson plans, teacher guides, children's books, and tee shirts. These products could be sold to bookstores, schools and visitors.

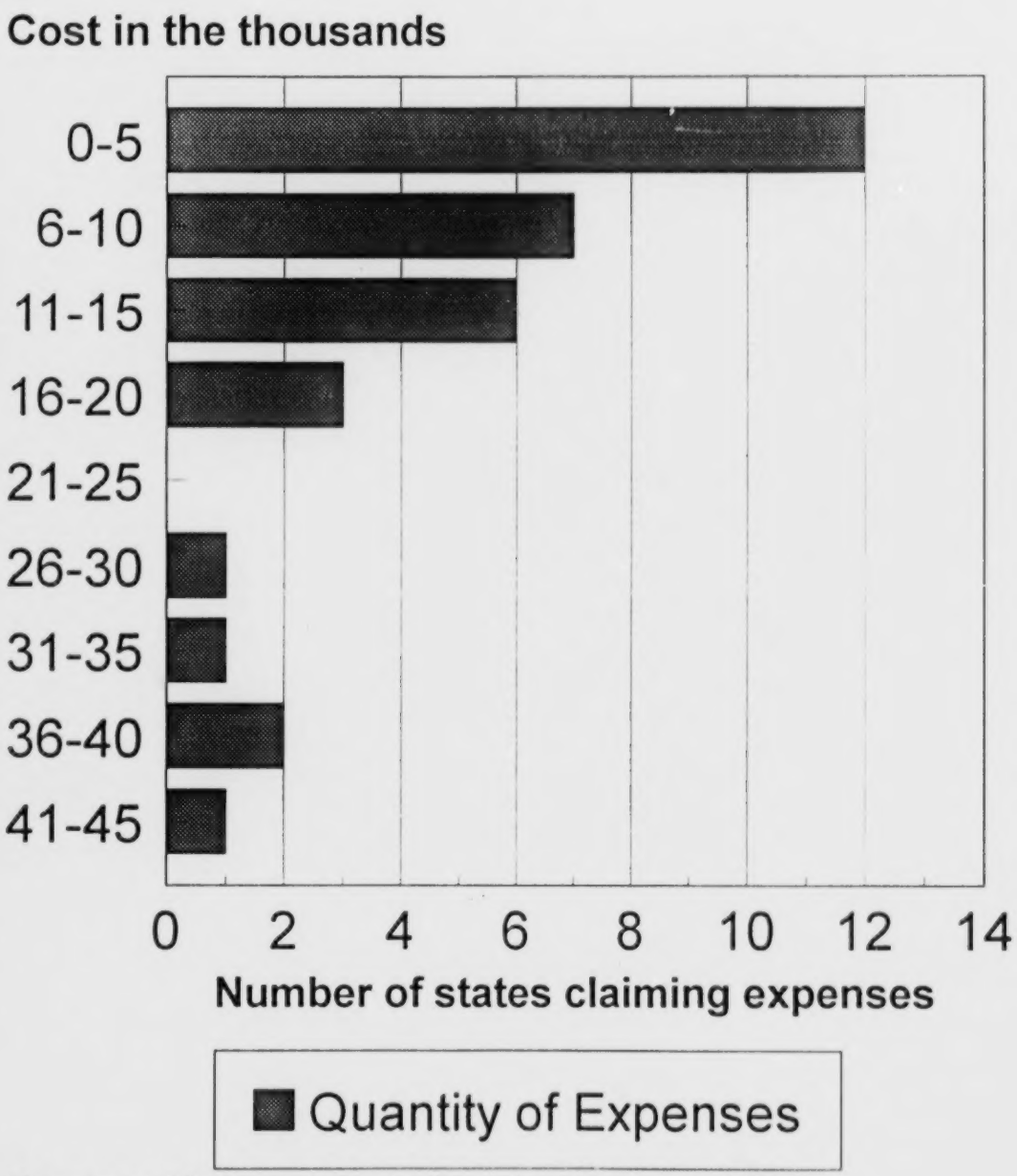
It is nearly impossible to calculate the cost of archeology week. Most states only track the cost for products, committee salaries, honorarium, postage, mailing, and supplies. These costs ranged from $1,000 to $21,000, the average being $8,700. Few states could estimate in-kind donations and volunteer time. The following estimates were provided, Oregon ($28,000), Texas ($50,000), Vermont ($15,000), and Washington ($30,000). Figure 5 displays the range of total costs reported in the survey. To assist in future fund-raising efforts, more detailed records of expenses and in-kind contributions should be kept.

Publicity

An archeology week will never succeed without publicity. There is no point in creating fabulous programs if no one knows about them. Sponsors should plan to spend considerable time finding ways to publicize events.

The standard promotional kit usually includes a governor's proclamation, poster, and a calendar of events. The poster has become the symbol for archeology week. It is a more attractive, creative and professional product. Budgets usually cover poster production, unless it is donated from a local company. Contests are one means for designing them. One suggestion is to advertise the contest as an *art contest* to generate more creative entries. Awards can be given to winning entries. For example, winners of the Maryland's poster contest spent a day at the Archeology Society of Maryland (ASM) Field Session and the runners up received tee shirts. The poster can be mailed with other information on the archeology week to schools, museums, and libraries for public display. Posters can be placed in high-traffic areas, such as

Financing State Archeology Week



Source: National Park Service Survey 1996

Cost may not account for in-kind donations

Figure 5: Financing

bookstores, supermarkets, shopping malls, and business offices

The calendar of events lists the events, their time and place, sponsor, contact person, fees, pre-registry requirement, or age limit if the events are for children. The calendar may occur on the back of the poster, in a brochure, or as a booklet. Coordinators recommend a simple and easily understandable design that includes several phone numbers to call for more information. The calendar can be sent to libraries, museums, and schools to be displayed and distributed to the patrons and students.

The governor's proclamation is an effective tool for gaining political support for archeology. It would be beneficial as well to contact the local officials and congressional representatives.

Each state usually adds products with their promotional package. These include a brochure of sites to visit, a post-card of the poster, bookmarks, a tabloid newspaper, kitchen magnets, buttons, education pamphlets, fliers, bumper stickers, and teachers' guides. Arizona, California, and New Mexico have bookmark contests. Kansas produces a bookmark template that can be xeroxed. Hawaii and Minnesota produce tee shirts. Washington creates an event kit that includes a reading list, children's books, career information, instruction on site etiquette, and a certificate to sponsors and presenters.

Successful advertising methods include newspaper stories, local and statewide press releases, radio, television, brochures, fliers, and newsletters. The print medium is the most effective method for reaching the most people. Radio and television are used less frequently because organizers find the coverage too narrow. However, short public service spots are useful for targeting audiences watching educational programming.

The World Wide Web is becoming a popular medium with fourteen states reporting a web page. Other interesting methods mentioned in the survey are: South Carolina with a banner placed on state highways, Massachusetts with posters on public bulletin boards, Indiana with fliers in schools, Vermont with advertisements in magazines, and West Virginia with distributing brochures at shopping malls.

Direct mailings are the most effective print medium for contacting the public. Information is mailed to politicians, libraries, parks, museums, visitor centers, universities, historic preservation organizations, education service centers, and schools. Schools and their administrators are being targeted more frequently. Local and regional organizations are including announcements of archeology week programs in their newsletters. Arizona mails announcements in local utility bills. This sort of direct mailing has enabled organizers to reach thousands more people before the event.

Most organizers stress the importance of local advertising in order to generate grassroots excitement. Local sponsors have a critical role in achieving this goal. Word-of-mouth advertising remains an important factor at this level.

Publicity is considered an important factor in improving archeology week. Many coordinators expressed the sentiment that increasing advertising ensures a broad public turnout. Early program advertising will help achieve better attendance.

Events

Attendance is often used to measure the success of an event, though what the audience learns is equally important. From the survey events common to all states were site tours, lectures, demonstrations, and exhibits. The most popular events are those that involve hands-on activities. Children's events are especially appealing to parents who are looking for activities to share with their kids.

Site tours are the best attended events, particularly those with excavations in progress. The public enjoys this "behind the scenes" view. These tours provide a chance to graphically demonstrate what is lost when a site is destroyed or looted. Some states also use tours to emphasize the importance of reporting sites. Schools find field trips to sites appealing, particularly if tied to lessons being taught in the classroom.

Lectures have varied success depending on the topic and the target audience. They are particularly appealing to those already interested in archeology and if the topic is of local interest. Talks that are too technical do not hold the attention of a general audience. Demonstrations of tool making and other types of experimental archeology are very popular. Native Americans sponsor and participate in these programs in many states. Events that illustrate a state's cultural heritage are well attended.

Exhibits are useful for presenting current information about archeology in the state to a broad audience. Panels can be rotated to present diverse stories, and traveling exhibits can be shared between sponsors in remote, rural communities. Artifact identification emphasizes the importance of reporting finds to an archeologist. Needless to say, the promotion for such an event should be phrased so as not to encourage looting.

The survey indicated that more events are being designed for school groups. Teachers are provided with study guides, traveling trunks, children's books, and curriculum about archeological sites. Several states also have essay contests and competition for designing posters and bookmarks.

Examples of other innovative events are: lectures held during school lunch in Alabama; a 5K race with picnic and raffle in Connecticut; re-enactment's at state parks in Florida; island to island plane tours in Hawaii; piecing together artifacts in Massachusetts; video-taping events for public access TV in Missouri; archeology sleep-ins at museums in Virginia; and historic train rides and canoe trips in Washington.

According to organizers, the more novel the event, the more likely people will remember it--and become more involved in preserving the past. New Mexico, for example, has sponsored a murder mystery weekend at a historic hotel. It seems that participants listened so closely for clues that they learned a great deal about the people who had lived in the area (Sebastian and Cushman 1992:5). Finally, events should always provide the audience information on how to help protect archeological resources, how to report a find, and how to volunteer. Sponsors can provide a brochure or flier which lists telephone numbers and "how to" information.

The Future of Archeology Weeks

Archeology weeks are extremely successful outreach programs. They have reached hundreds of thousands of people, raised money for archeology, and raised public

awareness. However, discussion of archeology weeks has raised many questions about possibilities and future direction.

Coordinators in the survey identified 4 important issues to improve archeology week. First, a paid coordinator position is needed to adequately develop program content, raise funds, expand publicity, and recruit volunteers. Vermont funded a temporary position for 13 months without benefits. The position description included the ability to organize and coordinate events, ability to work with volunteers, government agencies and the private sector, and an interest in archeology. But like many temporary positions, funds were not available to fill the position the following year. The Arizona SHPO pays a staff member to coordinate their archeology month (with help from an intern for 2 months). Wisconsin, Iowa, South Carolina, and Texas use this approach. This trend is encouraging, especially as more SHPO offices organize archeology week.

Second, long-term financing must be secured to sustain archeology week. Currently, all states rely on funds from outside the organizing office. It was reported that donors are becoming more consistent supporters, though Federal agencies are more likely to lack funds year to year. Annual base funding is an ideal solution, but most organizing offices fall short of this commitment. The Arizona SHPO uses state lottery funds, while other SHPO offices target Historic Preservation Funds. Some coordinators expressed the need for a national initiative to raise sufficient funds. Perhaps a national funding project focused on private foundations or Federal-granting agencies (e.g. National Endowment for the Humanities) would provide matching funds to states. This issue and others are being considered by the State Archeology Week subcommittee of the Society for American Archaeology Public Education Committee.

The remaining two issues are directly related to finding solutions to staff and funds. Coordinators expressed the need to expand publicity and offer more diverse events in order to attract a larger audience. Many states lack the resources needed to develop advertising products and to fully use the various media. There is a growing need to develop new and exciting events to draw audiences. For example, the recent surge in educational programs for schools can not be sustained without adequate resources for creative designing and evaluation. Overall, many states are unable to improve their programs to meet the level of demand and expectations of their audience.

As more states become involved, there have been proposals for regional cooperation. This approach might enable states with limited resources to implement a joint archeology week. It may allow for more diversity, greater spending power, and broader interest. It also might provide a greater number of possible themes.

Summary

There are many benefits from archeology week, but chief among them is enhancing the public's understanding of archeology and preserving the archeological record. Archeology week can take a lead role in this public education effort. In many states, it is the primary outreach effort. One can't underestimate its importance in bringing professionals, avocationals and the interested public together for a common cause: to establish a constituency in support of archeology. Public support is essential for continued funding of archeology nationally.

Contributors also will find working with the public personally rewarding. As stated by Lynne Sebastian and David Cushman of New Mexico, veterans of archeology week, "it is exciting for all those in the field to see so many people taking time to participate in an archeology week, just because they believe in the importance of preserving our heritage" (Sebastian and Cushman 1992:37). At every event of every archeology celebration, it is encouraging to realize how many members of the public do care about archeology and are willing to put time and energy into sharing a love for the past.

References Cited

Bellantoni, Nicholas
1997 Personal communication

Brooks, Robert L.
1995 *A Report on Public Outreach in Oklahoma.* Oklahoma Archeological Survey, University of Oklahoma, Norman. Unpublished manuscript on file.

Callum, Kathleen E.
1995 *A Standing Ovation for "Join Hands With the Past"* Vermont Archaeology Week 95.

Cruse, Brett
1997 Personal Communication

Hoffman, Teresa L., and Shereen Lerner
1988 *Arizona Archeology Week. Promoting the Past to the Public.* Archeological Assistance Program *Technical Brief No. 2.* U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Archeological Assistance Division, Washington, DC.

Peebles, Giovanna
1997 Personal communication

Sebastian, Lynne, and David W. Cushman
1992 "New Mexico Heritage Preservation Week: Friendly Advice from Those on the Front Lines." In *State Archeological Education Programs*, edited by William B. Butler. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Archeological Services, Denver, CO.

Whitlam, Rob
1997 Personal communication.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank each state archeology week coordinator who took time out of a busy schedule to answer questions about their program and provide material. Hopefully, all coordinators will benefit from the new and updated information, and we can begin to work on the issues so important to sustaining archeology week into the next century.